

Debate Rules and Roles:

Everyone will be involved in our debates, either arguing for or against a particular stand or as a villager who has come informed and ready to contribute to the discussion. **The key is to focus on the real sticking points in the debate, not on generalities and straw-man arguments.**

Those arguing for or against a particular policy will come prepared with a hard copy of the outline of their argument. Try not to blatantly read from your prepared sheet, but you may glance at it to remind yourself of your next point. You will want to give a well-organized, concise presentation that delivers the strongest points in a convincing manner. A good plan for any such presentation is to *tell us what you're going to tell us, tell us, and then tell us what you told us*. Each person should talk for about 2-3 minutes. Divide the territory and talk for a combined total of 8-10 minutes.

The villagers will also come prepared with a hard copy of their own perspective and at least one question *for each side*. A paragraph or two is fine for your perspective. These folks will add their two cents during the discussion period.

Order of events:

- Pro arguments (8-10 minutes)
- Con arguments (8-10 minutes)
- Optional rebuttals
- Questions and Discussion involving Villagers and Formal Debaters

Grades

The villagers will vote on the following four categories:

- The best-prepared, most organized team
- The team that made the most in-depth use of rigorous economic tools and articles
- The team that made the best arguments relative to the difficulty of arguing their side
- The team that collectively displayed the most passion and enthusiasm for their arguments.

Assuming the team shows up with arguments, the instructor will provide a base score between 50 (looks like it was thrown together at the last minute) and 90 (amazing work) based on the quality and depth of your preparation, arguments, presentation, and questions/answers. You should reference about as many economics journal articles as you have people on your team. Your total score out of 100 will be your base score plus 5 points for each of the four categories that you win on the basis of villager voting.

Tips to boost your benefits and grades:

- Be as specific as you can about your proposals and arguments. For example, statements like “government is too big” mean different things to different people and make little progress towards any solutions. Instead, say *exactly* what you would cut, what the costs and benefits would be, and why the benefits exceed the costs.
- Read a few solid articles on each topic to add concreteness to your arguments.
- Use economic reasoning. This is your chance to make use of those econ tools!
- Don't wait until the day before the debate to start your thinking, planning, or research.
- Have fun with these juicy and important topics. These are some of the major issues that you and others in your generation must live through and resolve.

